

REMARKS

In the April 6, 2006 Office Action, the Examiner noted that claims 1-6 were pending in the application; rejected claims 1-6 under the first and second paragraphs of 35 USC § 112; and rejected claims 1-6 under 35 USC § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 5, 587, 816 to Gunjima et al. (Reference A in the December 8, 2003 Office Action). Claims 1-6 remain in the case. The rejections are traversed below.

Rejections under 35 USC § 112, First Paragraph

In item 4 on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-6 were rejected under the first paragraph of 35 USC § 112 "as failing to comply with the enablement requirement." Specifically, with respect to the limitation "polarization involved by light emitted from said light guide plate" (formerly recited at, e.g., claim 1, lines 12-13), the Examiner was apparently "unable to [understand why] one skilled in the art [would know] how it could be polarized light while such light [is] not transmitted/emitted from any polarizing element" (Office Action, page 2, lines 21-22).

The Examiner's attention is directed to pages 7-8 and Figs. 5 and 6 of the application which describe a test performed on light guide plate 4 (page 7, line 28 and Fig. 5). As illustrated in Fig. 6 and described in the first five paragraphs on page 8 of the application, the light guide plate produces "[l]ight having a polarization state" (page 8, line 20) that in the embodiment of the invention illustrated in Fig. 7 is "inputted to the prism sheet 12" (page 8, line 20). As apparent from Fig. 7, the "[l]ight having a polarization state" is emitted from the light guide plate 4.

The independent claims have been amended to recite "a light guide plate emitting light having a polarization state" (e.g., claim 1, lines 6-7) and the limitation which gave rise to the rejection under the first paragraph of 35 USC § 112 has been amended to recite "polarization of the light emitted from said light guide plate" (e.g., claim 1, lines 13-14). It is submitted that both of these limitations are fully supported by the description of polarization of light emitted by the light guide plate described on pages 7-8 of the application, such as the description of "a light beam emitted in the maximum-intensity-direction 23 is recognized as a representative emission from the light guide plate 4 and is examined for polarization state" (page 7, lines 27-29). Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection under the first paragraph of 35 USC § 112 is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 USC § 112, Second Paragraph

In item 6 on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-6 were rejected under the second paragraph of 35 USC § 112, because the Examiner indicated "it is confusing and unclear how light emitted from the light guide plate can be polarized without any polarizing element therefrom" (Office Action, page 3, lines 7-8).

As discussed above in response to the rejection under the first paragraph of 35 USC § 112, the independent claims have been amended to clarify that light emitted by the light guide plate has a polarization state, as described in the specification. Therefore, it is submitted that claims 1-6 meet the requirements of both the first and second paragraphs of 35 USC § 112.

Rejections under 35 USC § 102(b)

In item 8 on pages 3-4 of the Office Action, claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as anticipated by Gunjima et al. using the same words as in the July 19, 2005 Office Action, except for the changes on the last line of claim 3 that resulted from amendments made to the claims in the Amendment filed January 19, 2006, and the sentence added at page 4, lines 6-8 of the Office Action.

In item 9 on page 4 of the Office Action providing a "Response to Arguments," it was further asserted that because "the prism array 7, in order to redirect... light to the polarization plate 9, converts the light direction of the light having an angle of substantially 60° to the light direct[ion] having the direction perpendicular to the face of the LCD element (through the polarization 9)" (Office Action, page 4, lines 16-19), "light emitted from the light guide plate would be rotate[d] around a light traveling direction (e.g., from 60° to 90°)" (Office Action, page 4, lines 19-21).

The statements in the April 6, 2006 Office Action quoted in the preceding paragraph suggest that the **reflection** within prism array 7 described at column 12, lines 31-45 of Gunjima et al. has been confused with the **rotation** of the polarization of the emitted light recited in the independent claims, i.e., "polarization of the light emitted from said light guide plate is **rotated** around a traveling direction of the light toward a direction of a light transmission axis of said polarization plate by transmitting through the light control sheet" (e.g., claim 1, last 3 lines, emphasis added).

As discussed in the Request for Reconsideration filed June 8, 2004 and the Amendments filed August 5, 2004; May 3, 2005; and January 19, 2006, nothing has been found in column 12, lines 31-45 or anywhere else in Gunjima et al. that prism array 7 which causes

reflection of light as illustrated in Fig. 1 of Gunjima et al. has any role in the polarization of the light emitted therefrom. As clearly apparent from the symbols defined in the legend at the bottom of Fig. 1 and the description of polarized light separator 6 in column 11, lines 9-49, polarized light separator 6 causes light having a "polarization face perpendicular to plane" to be reflected within light guide 3 and permits light with an "in-plane polarization face" to pass through polarized light separator 6 and reach prism array 7. There is no subsequent mention of any effect on the polarization of the light by either prism array 7 or light diffusing sheet 8. Nor is there any suggestion that polarized light separator 6 has any effect on the polarization of the light passing therethrough. It merely acts as a polarized light filter, like that well known to anyone who has used polarized sunglasses.

Unlike Gunjima et al., as discussed above, the polarization effect of the light guide sheet is fully described in the specification. As also discussed above, the independent claims recite that the light emitted by the light guide plate has "a polarization state" (e.g., claim 1, line 7). All that is disclosed in Gunjima et al. is that prism array 7 **reflects** light which is then polarized by polarized light separator 6. As a result, there is no suggestion in Gunjima et al. that by transmission through the polarized light separator "a maximum-intensity-direction of polarization of the light emitted from said light guide plate is rotated around a traveling direction of the light toward a direction of a light transmission axis of said polarization plate" (e.g., claim 1, last 3 lines), because no description has been cited or found in Gunjima et al. regarding how light emitted by the prism array 7 is polarized or that the light emitted by the polarized light separator is aligned with "a direction of a light transmission axis of said polarization plate" (e.g., claim 1, last 2 lines).

Claims 2 and 3 recite the same limitations quoted above from claim 1 and therefore, it is submitted that claims 1-3 and claims 4-6 which depend therefrom patentably distinguish over Gunjima et al. for the above reasons.

Request for Examiner Interview

If the rejections under both the first and second paragraphs of 35 USC § 112 and the rejections of the claims based on Gunjima et al. are not withdrawn as a result of the amendments and remarks above, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone to arrange an Examiner Interview to discuss what further amendments are necessary to prevent these rejections.

Summary

It is submitted that Gunjima et al. does not teach or suggest the features of the present claimed invention. Thus, it is submitted that claims 1-6 are in a condition suitable for allowance. Reconsideration of the claims and an early Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: 10/5/06

By: Richard A. Gollhofer
Richard A. Gollhofer
Registration No. 31,106

1201 New York Avenue, NW, 7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501